

Message Text

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53

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PM-03 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 RSC-01 CIAE-00

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R 220905Z OCT 74

FM AMEMBASSY MADRID

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 267

INFO AMEMBASSY LISBON

USCINCEUR

C O N F I D E N T I A L MADRID 6633

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MARR, SP

SUBJ: REMARKS BY ARMY MINISTER COLOMA

1. IN COURSE OF BRIEF REMARKS AT DEDICATION OF NATIONAL MONUMENT TO SPANISH LEGION IN ZARAGOZA OCTOBER 15, ARMY MINISTER COLOMA GALLEGOS REAFFIRMED DEDICATION OF ARMY'S TO ITS PRIME MISSION TO DEFEND NATION, "TODAY UNDER COMMAND OF OUR CAUDILLO, AND TOMORROW UNDER COMMAND OF THE KING....." (SOME PRESS VERSIONS INDICATE THAT COLOMA REFERRED PERSONALLY TO PRINCE JUAN CARLOS WHO WAS PRESENT FOR THE OCCASION.)

2. COLOMA ALSO NOTED THAT SPANISH ARMY "AS PERMANENT CUSTODIAN OF NATION'S SECURITY WOULD NOT ALLOW ITS EFFORTS TO BE DEIVERTED FROM THAT OBJECTIVE BY THE EPHEMERAL AND INCONSEQUENTIAL OCCURRENCES OF THE DAY."

3. PRINCIPAL SPEAKER ALONG WITH COLMA WAS COL. CAPARROS, LEADER OF SPANISH LEGION VETERANS ORGANIZATION IN ZARAGOZA. SINCE JUAN CARLOS GRADUATED FROM SPANISH MILITARY ACADEMY AT ZARAGOZA, HE NORMALLY ATTENDS THAT INSTITUTION'S GRADUATION CEREMONIES. HOWEVER, THIS YEAR HE WAS UNABLE TO ATTEND, AND AS A CONSEQUENCE, LEGION COMMEMORATIVE CEREMONY WAS SELECTED AS AN APPROPRIATE OCCASION FOR HIS VISIT.

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4. COMMENT: SOME REPORTS APPEARING IN INTERNATIONAL PRESS MAY HAVE EXAGGERATED SIGNIFICANCE OF COLOMA'S REMARKS, WHICH TO US APPEARED STANDARD FARE FULLY CONSISTENT WITH RECENT PAST STATEMENTS BY HIM AND OTHER SPANISH MILITARY LEADERS IN SUPPORT OF INSTITUTION OF MONARCHY AFTER FRANCO. IN ADDITION, HIS WORDS AS QUOTED PARA 2 ARE MILDLY SIGNIFICANT, SINCE THEY MAY BE CONSTRUED AS ADMONISHMENT TO MEMBERS OF ARMY NOT TO ALLOW DAILY EBB AND FLOW OF POLITICS TO DISTRACT THEM FROM THEIR TRADITIONAL CONTINUING ROLE OF BEING "SOLID BASE ON WHICH PEACE AND PROGRESS OF NATION RESTS."
RIVERO

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